

## XXIV.—Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.

[Continued from p. 154.]

33. *Barrows and Schwarz on the American Crow.*

[The Common Crow of the United States. By Walter B. Barrows and E. A. Schwarz. U. S. Dept. Agricult. Ornith. & Mamm. Bulletin, No. 6, p. 9.]

Here we have the results of an extended and elaborate investigation into the food of the Common Crow of the U. S. (*Corvus americanus*), carried out, under the superintendence of Dr. Merriam, by Messrs. Barrows and Schwarz. It is based on an examination of nearly a thousand stomachs. After summing up the benefits and losses, the verdict is that the "good exceeds the bad, and that this Crow is rather a friend than an enemy to the farmer."

34. *Baur on the Galápagos.*

[The Differentiation of Species on the Galápagos Islands and the Origin of the Group. By G. Baur. Biological Lecture delivered at the Marine Biological Laboratory of Wood's Hole, Summer Session of 1894. Reprint. 8vo. Boston, U.S.A. 1895.]

Mr. Baur's lecture on the Galápagos and the curious phenomena exhibited in the differentiation of species in the various islands is well worthy of perusal. His conclusion is that only the "subsidence theory" is sufficient to account for the present state of the fauna.

"At a former period these islands were connected with each other, forming a single large island, which itself, at a still earlier time, was united with the continent, probably with Central America and the West Indies. When this large island was not yet broken up into a series of smaller islands, the number of species must have been very much smaller; probably there was only one species of *Nesomimus*, of *Certhidea*, of *Tropidurus*, of the Land-Tortoise, and so on. Through isolation into single islands the peculiar differentiation of the species began; an originally single species was differentiated in many different forms; every, or nearly every, island developed its peculiar races."

35. *Blackburn (Mrs. H.) on Bird-life.*

[Birds from Moidart and elsewhere. Drawn from nature by Mrs. Hugh Blackburn. Royal 8vo. Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1895.]

“Alas, how time escapes!” It seems but yesterday, and yet nearly 34 years have passed since the appearance of the first notice in ‘The Ibis’ of Mrs. Blackburn’s ‘Birds drawn from Nature,’ while the concluding portion of that volume was reviewed just 28 years since. In the interval Mrs. Blackburn’s hand has not lost its cunning, as shown by some of her later drawings—for instance, the Goshawk on its prey (p. 18)—while the letterpress is excellent of its kind. Where the artist excels is, however, in depicting *movement* in birds, and this is evident even in those cases in which the outline is slightly blurred. We particularly admire the frontispiece, with a group of sea-birds fishing tumultuously off the island of Eigg, the Wren feeding her brood (p. 102), and the Cormorants, Golden Plover, and Seals on the basaltic islet of Haskeir, near Canna. It is hardly necessary to eulogize the powers of observation shown by the author of one of the best descriptions extant of the behaviour of the nestling Cuckoo; but here is a little suggestion for the attention of those interested in Crows:—“In the young Grey-backed Crow the eyes are blue. I do not know if it is so in the Black Carrion Crow.” Nor do we at this moment, though we incline to think that the irides in the latter are dark; but well-informed people will doubtless be able to tell us.

36. *Büttikofer on Turdinulus and the allied Genera.*

[A Revision of the Genus *Turdinus* and Genera allied to it, with an Enumeration of the Specimens contained in the Leyden Museum. By J. Büttikofer. Notes Leyden Mus. xvii. p. 65.]

Mr. Büttikofer gives us a revision of *Turdinulus* and the allied genera of the family, based upon the specimens in the Leyden Museum. He commences with a key of the 21 genera—*Turdinus*, *Ptilocichla*, *Ptilopyga*, *Lanioturdinus*\*, *Turdinulus*, *Rimator*, *Malacocincla*, *Anuropsis*, *Crateroscelis*, *Amaurocichla*, *Trichostoma*, *Drymocataphus*, *Scotocichla*,

*Ortygocichla*, *Elaphornis*, *Muelleria*\*, *Pellorneum*, *Erythro-*  
*cichla*, *Illadopsis*\*, *Ophrydornis*\*, and *Malacopteron*. Of  
these generic terms the four marked with an asterisk (\*) are  
now proposed for the first time. A complete revision of  
the species follows.

37. *Chapman (F. M.) on the Birds of Trinidad.*

[Further Notes on Trinidad Birds, with a Description of a new Species  
of *Synallaxis*. By Frank M. Chapman. Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.  
vii. p. 321.]

On his second visit to Trinidad, in March and April, 1894,  
Mr. Chapman devoted his attention "largely" to mammals,  
but made some additions to our knowledge of the birds.  
Notes are given on 12 species not observed in 1893, amongst  
which is a *Synallaxis*, allied to *S. terrestris* of Tobago,  
described as *S. carri*. Some additional notes on species  
observed in 1893 are given.

38. 'Check-list of North-American Birds.'

[Check-list of North-American Birds, prepared by a Committee of the  
American Ornithologists' Union. Second and revised Edition. New  
York, 1895.]

Since the issue of the original 'Check-list of North-  
American Birds' in 1885, seven supplements to it have been  
published, the last of these having been issued in 1894. The  
numerous additions and changes in nomenclature made in  
these supplements are incorporated in the "second and  
revised edition" now before us, besides which the "habitats"  
attached to every species and subspecies have been brought  
up to date.

The numbers attached to the species in the first edition of  
the 'Check-list' have not been altered, so that in the present  
edition, as in the last, they remain 768. But 38 new names  
are introduced in their proper places, so that the whole  
number of species in the 'Check-list' is now 806. Besides  
these there are 268 subspecies recognized.

In the present edition, as in the former, the usual order

of arrangement is reversed; the Passeres are placed at the end of the list and the Pygopodes at the beginning. We are unable to see any advantage in this alteration, which is contrary to the usual practice of ornithologists, though often employed in general systematic works on zoology, in cases when it is desirable to consider the lower and more simple organisms first. It is, of course, just as correct to commence one way as the other; but "priority," so much worshipped nowadays, is decidedly in favour of beginning "at the top."

One point there is in the American code of nomenclature which, if insisted on, will always keep it apart from the rest of the world, *i. e.* the maintenance of the grammatical—and, may be, accidental—errors made by the original proposers of names. We cannot understand how any educated person can agree to sacrifice grammar to the demon of priority. We are glad to observe that the new German rules of nomenclature take quite the opposite view on this subject.

### 39. *Dresser's Supplement to the 'Birds of Europe.'*

[A History of the Birds of Europe, including all the Species inhabiting the Western Palearctic Region.—Supplement. By H. E. Dresser, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c. Part III. May 1895; Part IV. August 1895; Part V. October 1895. 4to. London, 1895.]

Since our last notice of this handsome work ('Ibis,' 1895, p. 392) four more parts have appeared, with illustrations by Mr. Keulemans of the following species:—

- Part III. *Phylloscopus viridanus*, *P. nitidus*; *Acredula macedonica*, *A. caucasica*; *Parus atriceps*, *P. bokharensis*, *P. cypristes*, *P. pleskei*, *P. palmensis*, *P. teneriffæ*, *P. ombriosus*; *Sitta whiteheadi*; *Motacilla personata*; *Anthus similis*.
- Part IV. *Motacilla xanthophrys*; *Lanius grimmi*, *L. funereus*, *L. leucopterus*, *L. radii*; *Carduelis caniceps*; *Coccothraustes carneipes*; *Passer ammodendri*; *Montifringilla nivalis*, *M. alpicola*; *Fringilla palmæ*.
- Part V. *Erythrospiza obsoleta*; *Bucanetes mongolicus*; *Pyrhula cassini*; *Uragus sibiricus*; *Loxia rubrifasciata*; *Emberiza luteola*, *E. huttoni*, *E. saharæ*, *E. cioides*; *Alauda gulgula*.

The letterpress of the first and second species figured appeared in Part II. To the three forms of *Acredula caudata*

recognized in Europe by some systematists, two more are now added, and as Mr. Dresser appears to require a partner in subdividing the Paridæ (teste *Parus britannicus*), he has found one this time in Count Salvadori, who instigated the differentiation of *Acredula macedonica*. The Indian species figured under the name of *Parus atriceps*, Horsf., is described under the earlier name of *P. cinereus*, Vieillot. The researches of Mr. Meade-Waldo in the Canary Islands have shown that three unsuspected forms of Blue Tit exist in that group, and these are duly described, with illustrations; but *Troglodytes pallidus*, of Transcaspia, is not figured, because it is "merely a pale desert form" of *T. parvulus*, though admitted to specific distinction. For the Desert Finch named *Erythrospiza obsoleta* on the plate, the genus *Bucanetes* has been accepted in the letterpress. An able review is given of the Starlings of the Western Palæarctic region, and, after treating of the forms allied to *Sturnus vulgaris*, Mr. Dresser decides that *S. unicolor* may be placed on one side as quite distinct from any other species. The plates are up to their former standard of excellence, but the figures of some of the Shrikes seem to be rather too large.

#### 40. *Drummond-Hay on the Birds of the Tay.*

[Bird-life within the Banks of the Tay, from Kenmore to Invergowrie. By Col. H. M. Drummond-Hay, C.M.Z.S. Trans. Perthshire Soc. Nat. Sci. ii. pp. 62-77.]

It is with deep regret that we allude to this interesting paper as being the last we shall receive from its author, whose much-lamented decease will be found recorded further on. The paper is short, but full of valuable matter, and the descriptive portion is charming, for Col. Drummond-Hay belonged to the good old school of those who wrote English, and not "Journalese."

#### 41. *D'Urban and Mathew on the Birds of Devon.*

[Supplement to the Birds of Devon. By W. S. M. D'Urban, F.L.S., and the Rev. Murray A. Mathew, M.A., F.L.S. Pp. 31. 8vo. London, 1895.]

Since the publication of 'The Birds of Devon,' which we

noticed in 'The Ibis,' 1893, p. 131, sufficient additional information has been obtained to render a supplement necessary. Several species have been added to the list of breeders, among these the Short-eared Owl, the nest of which was found near Braunton, probably the most southern record for England. Several rare visitors have also occurred, such as the Ruddy Sheld-Duck; while a specimen of the American Yellow-billed Cuckoo was picked up dead last October no further off than Bridport, Dorset, and *ought* to have dropped in Devon.

#### 42. *Elliot on North-American Shore-Birds.*

[North American Shore-Birds: a History of the Snipes, Sandpipers, Plovers, and their Allies inhabiting the Beaches and Marshes of the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts, the Prairies and the Shores of the inland Lakes and Rivers of the North-American Continent; their Popular and Scientific Names, together with a full Description of their Mode of Life, Nesting, Migration, and Dispersions, with Descriptions of the Summer and Winter Plumages of Adults and Young, so that each Species may be readily identified; a Reference Book for the Naturalist, Sportsman, and Lover of Birds. By Daniel Giraud Elliot, F.R.S.E, &c. With seventy-four Plates. 8vo. London, 1895.]

The second and somewhat lengthy title saves us the trouble of explaining the scope of the work. The illustrations are good of their kind, while the letterpress is suitable for the majority of the class of readers for whom it is designed. We are sorry to see a reproduction of the erroneous—and we hoped exploded—story of the discovery of the eggs of the Curlew-Sandpiper in Greenland; in fact the whole article on this subject is full of blunders, and there are other errors which might have been avoided. The name of the distinguished naturalist to the 'Alert' appears throughout as Fielding; Capt. Lyon, of the 'Hecla,' is always Lyons, and so on.

#### 43. *Hartert on new Birds.*

[Description of a New Humming-bird. By Ernst Hartert. *Novitates Zool.* ii. p. 484.

Description of a new Flycatcher from the Solomon Islands. By Ernst Hartert. *Ibid.* p. 485.]

Mr. Hartert describes *Heliangelus claudia*, a new Hum-

ming-bird from Colombia, and *Pomarea ribbei*, from Munia, Shortland Islands, Solomon group.

44. *Hartert on Birds from Mindoro.*

[On a small Collection of Birds from Mindoro. By Ernst Hartert. *Novitates Zool.* ii. p. 486.]

After some prefatory remarks on what is known of the Ornis of Mindoro, Mr. Hartert gives a list of the birds (38 species) obtained during his visit to North Mindoro in 1894 by Mr. Everett and sent to the Tring Museum. Critical remarks are added. No new species are described.

45. *Kirby on African Wild Game.*

[In *Haunts of Wild Game: a Hunter-Naturalist's Wanderings from Kahlamba to Libombo.* By Frederick Vaughan Kirby, F.Z.S. Blackwoods, 1896.]

Those who appreciate hunting-adventures and stories of big-game shooting will find Mr. Kirby's narrative full of interest. It relates moreover to a country as yet but little known—the north-eastern district of the Transvaal adjoining the strip of Portuguese territory which borders the coast. This land and its inhabitants, both man and beast, are fully described in the present volume. An Appendix is devoted mainly to field-notes on the mammal-fauna of this district, but the principal birds likely to be noticed by sportsmen are also mentioned. Of these the Great Kori Bustard (*Otis kori*) “deservedly stands first.” This magnificent bird is stated to attain a height of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet and a weight of 40 pounds.

46. *Leverkühn upon Bird-protection in England.*

[*Vogelschutz in England.* Von Paul Leverkühn. Sonderabdruck aus den ‘*Ornith. Monatsb. des Deutsch. Ver. zum Schutze d. Vogelw.*,’ 1894, Nos. 1-11. 8vo. Halle a. S., 1895.]

Dr. Leverkühn has prepared for the “German Union for the Protection of Birds” an elaborate account of the various measures taken by Acts of Parliament and in other ways

in England for the guarding of bird-life from wanton destruction in this country.

47. *Lilford's 'Coloured Figures of British Birds.'*

[Coloured Figures of the Birds of the British Islands. Issued by Lord Lilford, F.Z.S. &c., President of the British Ornithologists' Union. Part XXX., February 1895; XXXI., June 1895. Royal 8vo. London.]

Since we last noticed the progress of our President's beautiful work ('Ibis,' 1895, p. 282) two more parts (xxx. and xxxi.) have been issued. They contain life-like coloured illustrations of the following species:—

Linota hornemanni.	Columba livia.
Nyctala tengmalmi.	Ægialitis cantiana.
Falco gyrfalco.	— curonica.
Clangula albeola.	Phalaropus fulicarius.
Cosmonetta histrionica.	Scolopax gallinula.
Aquila nævia.	— gallinago.
Pandion haliaëtus.	Fulica atra.
Somateria stelleri.	Œdicnemus scolopax.
— spectabilis.	Tringa temmincki.
Œdemia perspicillata.	Totanus hypoleucus.
Mergus cucullatus.	Larus melanocephalus.
Harelda glacialis.	Lestris richardsoni.

48. *Lilford's 'Birds of Northamptonshire.'*

[Notes on the Birds of Northamptonshire and Neighbourhood. By Lord Lilford. Illustrated by Messrs. A. Thorburn and G. E. Lodge. 2 vols. London: Porter, 1895.]

Here are two splendidly illustrated volumes from the pen of our President, which will be read with great interest by all members of the B. O. U. and by other students of our native ornithology. They contain a series of notes on 227 species of birds which have been recorded as occurring in the county of Northampton or in its immediate neighbourhood. The bulk of them have been already published at irregular intervals in the 'Journal of the Northamptonshire Natural History Society' between 1880 and 1893. They are now republished in a uniform shape, with corrections and additions, and will be found to be "excellent reading," as not only are the



local occurrences of every species described, but general remarks, based upon Lord Lilford's great experience, not only in other parts of England, but also in the south of Europe, are freely introduced. The numerous photogravure plates are taken from drawings prepared by Mr. A. Thorburn, and the wood-engravings are from the pencil of Mr. G. E. Lodge. All these, we need hardly say, are of a very high degree of merit, for it is not to be supposed that the President of our Union would accept anything but first-class work for the illustrations of his favourite subject. We heartily congratulate Lord Lilford on having brought his many years' labours on the birds of his native county to a successful conclusion.

49. *Lumsden and Brown on the Fauna of Loch Lomond.*

[A Guide to the Natural History of Loch Lomond and Neighbourhood. Mammals and Birds: by James Lumsden, F.Z.S. Reptiles and Fishes: by Alfred Brown. 8vo. Glasgow: D. Bryce & Son., 1895.]

This is a handy volume, suitable for those persons who visit Loch Lomond in summer or autumn. An outline of the portion relating to the birds appeared some years ago in the 'Proceedings of the Natural History Society of Glasgow,' but it has now been entirely re-written and much new matter introduced. It seems excellent. There are two illustrations of hybrids between the Pheasant and the Capercaillie.

50. *Martorelli's Notes from Italy.*

[Notizie Ornitologiche sopra Osservazioni fatte nell' Anno 1894-95 dal Prof. Giacinto Martorelli. Atti Soc. Ital. Sci. Nat. xxxv.]

In the first of these small articles an account is given of a hybrid Macaw produced in captivity at Trenno, between *Ara macao*, ♂, and *A. militaris*, ♀. From the second paper we learn that the severe cold, and especially the heavy snows which fell in the winter of 1894-95, drove a very unusual number of Golden Eagles to the lower districts of Lombardy, where several were examined in the flesh by Prof. Martorelli. In the third paper a form of *Lanius excubitor* taken in Italy—and almost melanotic—is discussed.

51. *Meyer and Wigglesworth on Birds from the Talaut Islands.*

[Eine zweite Sammlung von Vögeln von den Talaut Inseln. Von A. B. Meyer und L. W. Wigglesworth. Abhandl. u. Ber. k. zool. u. anthrop. Mus. Dresden, 1894-95, No. 9.]

We have now a second paper on the birds of the Talaut Islands (*cf.* 'Ibis,' 1895, p. 136) from the same authors. It contains an account of 36 species, of which four are new to science (*Tanygnathus talautensis*, *Edoliisoma talautense*, *Dicaeum talautense*, and *Zosterops bubelo*) and ten were not represented in the former collection. The avifauna of the Talaut Islands is now known to comprehend 58 species, of which a complete list is given.

52. *Millais on the South-African Veldt.*

[A Breath from the Veldt. By John Guille Millais, F.Z.S. With Illustrations by the Author and a Frontispiece by Sir J. E. Millais, R.A. London: Sotheran, 1895.]

This is one of the most attractive books we have met with for a long time. Besides the crowds of illustrations, which are fully worthy of the author's well-known name, the narrative is of an entertaining and instructive character, and gives us a good account of Mr. Millais's adventures in the veldt of South Africa.

Mr. Millais went first to Beaufort West to see the springbucks, then took a long waggon-trek from Johannesburg over the Limpopo into the haunts of the white rhinoceros, and finally proceeded into the Orange Free State to shoot the wildbeeste. South Africa is the land of the larger mammals, and our author's principal dealings are with antelopes, zebras, buffaloes, and beasts of prey. But birds are by no means neglected. Excellent notes and illustrations are given of Bustards, Vultures, Jabirus, Touracoes, and other characteristic forms of African bird-life. Most interesting are the accounts of our author's experiences with the Ox-peckers and Honey-guides. The latter we must extract for the benefit of our readers:—

“As the bird’s name implies, it is excessively fond of honey, but as he cannot extract it from the holes in trees where he knows it to be, he calls man to his assistance to dig it out for him. Mentally marking every nest of bees in a certain locality, he hangs around till he meets with a friendly biped, to whom he makes known his presence and his desire by a pleasant chuckling note. This he keeps up incessantly as long as the man is in view. Then, after a short undulating flight of about 600 yards, he generally alights on a dead bough, so as to make himself as conspicuous as possible, and loudly continues his chuckling. If not attended to, he returns again and again with increasing audacity, as I have previously described; but if followed he waits till the man comes within 50 yards, and then continues his flights, which vary from 100 to 200 yards, till the nearest nest is discovered. A dead bough is pretty sure to be about, or the bees would not be there; and on this he settles with his eyes towards the bees’-nest. Or, if this hint is not sufficient, he will go and perch himself in the mouth of the hole, so that the greatest blockhead in the country cannot fail to find it. Piet Landsberg, who was fond of honey, and liked running after these birds, found no less than four bees’-nests in a short time—all shown to him by one bird. The nest is generally plastered up with mud and not very difficult to extract; and while you are engaged in this operation the Honey-guide sits quietly on the tree, trusting to your honour to give him a share of the plunder, which, I need hardly say, is always done by the natives.”

We may also call attention to Mr. Millais’s account of the birds met with on the Mzingwani River (p. 97), where he describes the fish-eating habits of *Haliaëtus vocifer*, the Pied Kingfisher, the Roller, and other feathered inhabitants of the district.

### 53. Muirhead’s ‘Birds of Berwickshire.’

[The Birds of Berwickshire, with Remarks on their Local Distribution, Migration, and Habits, and also on the Folk-lore, Proverbs, Popular

Rhymes, and Sayings connected with them. By George Muirhead, F.R.S.E., F.Z.S., &c. Vol. II. 8vo. Edinburgh: D. Douglas, 1895.]

This is the concluding portion of a work of remarkable beauty, the first volume of which we noticed in 'The Ibis,' 1890, p. 117. As before, there is a daintily-etched vignette to almost every species mentioned; while many quaint sayings and scraps of old ballads show the important part played by birds in the daily life of the lowland peasant, and antiquarian lore abounds. Not that the life-history of birds is made of secondary importance, for the calendars and tables of dates of migration are all admirable; while, for graphic description, the reader may turn to the Bittern and the sketch of the condition of Bille Mire, near Chirnside, where the "boom" had not ceased until the present century was somewhat advanced.

54. *Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society's 'Transactions.'*

[Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society. Vol. VI. Pt. 1. Norwich, 1895.]

The principal paper on ornithology in this part is by Mr. J. H. Gurney, who gives an interesting account of the great arrival of Little Auks (*Mergulus alle*) on the coast of Norfolk and vicinity during the severe cold of January 1895. No fewer than 285 examples were actually received by taxidermists, most of them picked up dead or dying from starvation and cold, for very few indeed were shot. In Yorkshire the preponderance of females was remarked, and in Norfolk all the earlier birds (with one exception) were of that sex, while the later ones were nearly all males. Mr. Gurney also contributes some remarks on the rarer species of Raptores added to the magnificent collection in the Castle Museum, as set forth in Mr. Southwell's Report. Lastly, Mr. Gurney has communicated some extracts from a lecture given by William Lean in Birmingham in 1856. The latter described a Kite's nest robbed near Neath, the four eggs in which were covered up with black-and-red plaided Welsh flannel; and also made remarks, far in advance of the time, respecting the

evidence that in many cases the Cuckoo must necessarily place her egg in the nest of the fosterers by means of her bill. Mr. F. Danby Palmer's account of old-time Yarmouth naturalists is worthy of perusal. The Rev. Julian G. Tuck gives an account of a bird said to be *Uria bruennichi* obtained near Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, in January 1895, and supposed at first to be a young Razorbill; and an illustration of an undoubted Brünnich's Guillemot is given, *but* it is from an Arctic specimen, and is not a portrait of the bird in question. The claim of this species to a place in the British list has been fully established only since December 1894, though there was previously a strong probability that the bird occasionally visited the British coast, because an example had been obtained as far south as Havre.

#### 55. North's Notes on Australian Ornithology.

[Note on a Semi-albino Specimen of *Dacelo gigas*. By Alfred J. North, F.L.S. Records Austral. Mus. ii. No. 6.

Note on a Nest of *Petræca leggii*, Sharpe. *Id. op. cit.*]

The first note is explained by the title. The second is on the Scarlet-breasted "Robin" of Australia (*Petræca leggii*), which builds its well-formed nest on a horizontal branch or in a cavity of a tree. Such a nest Mr. North now describes and figures, from a specimen forwarded to the Australian Museum, Sydney, by Mr. Gabriel, from Bayswater, Victoria.

#### 56. Noska and Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen on the Caucasian Black Grouse.

[Das kaukasische Birkhuhn (*Tetrao molokosiewiczzi*, Tacz.). Eine monographische Studie von Max Noska, weiland Jagdleiter Sr. kaiserl. Hoheit des Grossfürsten Sergei Michailowitsch, unter Mitwirkung von Victor Ritter von Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen. Separatabdruck aus 'Ornith. Jahrb.' vi. 1895.]

This is a complete monograph on the Black Grouse of the Caucasus, *Tetrao molokosiewiczzi*, prepared by the well-known ornithologist Victor Ritter von Tschusi zu Schmidhoffen from the specimens and field-notes of Herr Max Noska. It

is accompanied by a plate containing coloured figures of the male, female, young male, and chick.

### 57. Poynting's 'Eggs of British Birds.'

[Eggs of British Birds.—Limicolæ (Plovers, Snipes, Sandpipers, &c.). By Frank Poynting. Parts I.—III. 4to. London: R. H. Porter, 1895.]

It would be difficult to speak too highly of the beauty and accuracy of the coloured illustrations in this work. We have compared them carefully with the figures in the edition of Hewitson which is generally known as the second, in which, as Hewitson told the writer of this notice, he put forth the whole of his powers of delineation, and we think that Mr. Poynting's best work quite comes up to that of the great pioneer in oology. And then again, where Hewitson was often only too glad to have a single specimen to figure, his successor has been able to pick and choose from a large series, and can sometimes give a plate with as many as a dozen characteristic examples. It goes without saying that the eggs of many species now figured were unobtainable in former days. The letterpress is excellent and very well selected, consisting chiefly of quotations from authorities who have written from personal observation. The eggs figured belong to the following species:—

- Part I. *Eudromias morinellus*; *Charadrius pluvialis*, *C. dominicus*; *Hematopus ostralegus*; *Recurvirostra avocetta*; *Himantopus candidus*; *Scolopax rusticola*; *Tringa maculata*, *T. striata*, *T. rufescens*; *Bartramia longicauda*; *Totanus ochropus*, *T. fuscus*.
- Part II. *Cursorius gallicus*; *Charadrius fulvus*; *Vanellus vulgaris*; *Streptilas interpres*; *Gallinago caelestis*; *Macrorhamphus griseus*; *Limicola platyrhyncha*; *Tringa alpina*; *Calidris arenaria*; *Totanus macularius*, *T. calidris*; *Limosa belgica*; *Numenius phæopus*.
- Part III. *Ægialitis hiaticula*, *Æ. curonica*, *Æ. cantiana*, *Æ. vocifera*; *Phalaropus fulicarius*, *P. hyporboreus*; *Gallinago gallinula*; *Tringa fuscicollis*, *T. minutilla*; *Machetes pugnax*; *Numenius arquata*, *N. borealis*.

58. *Read on the Colours of Birds.*

[The Nature, Distribution, and Uses of the Colours of Birds. By R. H. Read, M.B.O.U. N. Staffordshire Naturalists' Field Club, Nov. 20th, 1894.]

We have received a separate copy of this excellent little paper, read before the North Staffordshire Field Club. Mr. Read has evidently given considerable attention to a subject which was neither too severe, nor yet too trivial, for the audience he addressed. To speak of Keeler's "work" is somewhat misleading, for, though good in matter, it is merely a paper on 'The Evolution in the Colour of the Land-Birds of North America,' published at San Francisco in 1893.

59. *Rothschild on new Species of Birds.*

[A new Species and Genus of Rollers. By the Hon. Walter Rothschild. *Novitates Zool.* ii. p. 479.

A new Species of Bower-bird. *Id. ibid.* p. 480.

A new Species of Rail. *Id. ibid.* p. 481.

A new Species of Tanager. *Id. ibid.* p. 481.

On a new Parrot. *Id. ibid.* p. 492.]

In the fourth number of vol. ii. of 'Novitates Zoologicae,' Mr. Rothschild describes the following novelties:—(1) *Uratelornis chimæra*, a very remarkable new form from Madagascar allied to *Atelornis*; (2) *Amblyornis flavifrons*, a new Bower-bird from Dutch New Guinea; (3) *Hypotaenidia owstoni*, a new Rail from Guam, Marianne Is.; (4) *Ramphocelus dunstalli*, a new Tanager from Central America; and (5) *Palæornis intermedia*, a new Parrot, supposed to be from Bombay! We are a little disinclined to believe that a new Parrot has been discovered in British India, and venture to suggest that further investigations should be made on this subject.

60. *Salvadori on the Chenomorphae, Crypturi, and Ratitæ.*

[Catalogue of the *Chenomorphæ*, *Crypturi*, and *Ratitæ* in the Collection of the British Museum. By T. Salvadori. London, 1895.]

The 27th volume of the great Catalogue of Birds, being

ready, is issued before the 24th, 25th, and 26th. It is devoted mainly to the great group of Anseres, with its allies the Palamedeæ and Phœnicopteri, but contains also the Tinami and Ratitæ. We all know the character of Count Salvadori's work, which, on this, as it has been on all previous occasions, is of the most painstaking and finished description. If, therefore, we venture to criticize some of the results he has arrived at, it must not be supposed that we undervalue this most meritorious and most useful volume as a whole.

In the first place systematists, as we all know, may be "lumpers" or "splitters." "Splitting" is in these days very much in fashion, and we think that our author has yielded rather too freely to that tendency, both in the matter of generic and specific divisions, especially as regards the species of Tinamous, to the number of which he has added no fewer than 14.

In the second place, the changes of nomenclature Count Salvadori proposes to introduce, especially as regards some of our most familiar species, are absolutely alarming, and we do not think he will induce his brother ornithologists to follow him in these radical innovations—at any rate we *hope* not. Who will know the Bean Goose in *Anser fabalis*, or the White-eyed Duck as *Nyroca africana*? Such names are only useful to conceal their owners, as language has been said to be intended to disguise our thoughts! No doubt Latham, in an absent mood, latinized the name of Bean Goose in his 'List of the Birds of Great Britain' into *Anas fabalis* a year before Gmelin gave it the name of *Anas segetum*. But the term "*fabalis*" has been clean forgotten ever since. Even Latham himself never used it again, and in his 'Index Ornithologicus' called the Bean Goose "*Anas segetum*," and did not even allude to "*Anas fabalis*." Nor has any other author ever thought of it during the past 108 years. Under these circumstances the specific term *fabalis* may be deservedly neglected, as withdrawn by the author himself and obsolete.

In the same way "*africana*" has never been used as the



specific name of the White-eyed Duck. Gmelin's *Anas africana* may or may not refer to that species, but his *Anas ferruginea* is of exactly the same date, and has been in usage for the last hundred years. Why, then, should we be called upon to make such an unnecessary change, and to throw aside a good name to adopt a bad one?

The species of *Chenomorphæ* treated of in the present volume and recognized as valid are 203, which are represented by 5044 specimens in the National Collection, only eight species being left without representatives. Of *Tinamous* 65 species are acknowledged, represented by 363 specimens, and of *Ratitæ* 26 species, represented by 134 specimens. Seven *Tinamous* and four *Ratitæ* only are deficient in the national series.

The following four generic terms are proposed as new in this volume:—*Asarcornis* (type *Anas scutulata*); *Pteronetta* (type *Querquedula hartlaubi*); *Nesochen* (type *Anser sandvicensis*); and *Elasmonetta* (type *Anas chlorotis*).

The following species are described as new, or have new names assigned to them:—

<i>Erismatura æquatorialis.</i>	<i>Crypturus salvini.</i>
<i>Merganetta frænata.</i>	— <i>dissimilis.</i>
<i>Merganser comatus.</i>	— <i>columbianus.</i>
<i>Tinamus fuscipennis.</i>	— <i>mexicanus.</i>
— <i>latifrons.</i>	— <i>occidentalis.</i>
— <i>castaneiceps.</i>	<i>Nothoprocta coquimbica.</i>
<i>Nothocercus intercedens.</i>	<i>Nothura nigroguttata.</i>
<i>Crypturus griseiventris.</i>	— <i>boliviana.</i>
— <i>simplex.</i>	

Coloured figures are given of the following species:—*Dendrocygna guttulata*; *Nettion albigularis*, *N. gibberifrons*; *Dafila eutoni*; *Nyroca innotata*; *Merganetta frænata*, *M. armata*; *Tinamus castaneiceps*, *T. solitarius*; *Nothocercus nigricapillus*; *Crypturus castaneus*, *C. erythropus*, *C. bartletti*, *C. scolopax*, *C. balstoni*; *Rhynchotis maculicollis*; *Nothoprocta coquimbica*, *N. pentlandi*, *N. ornata*; *Nothura marmorata*, *N. darwinii*.

61. *Salvadori on Birds from Argentina and Paraguay.*

[Viaggio del dott. Alfredo Borelli nella Repubblica Argentina e nel Paraguay. Uccelli raccolti nel Paraguay, nel Matto Grosso, nel Tucuman e nella Provincia di Salto. Par Tommaso Salvadori. Boll. Mus. Zool. e Anat. comp. R. Univ. Torino, x. No. 208, 1895.]

Dr. A. Borelli, during a journey in Southern Brazil, Paraguay, and the northern provinces of Argentina, made a considerable collection of birds, which Count Salvadori refers to 190 species. Of 145 species of which specimens were obtained in Paraguay, 20 are not mentioned in Graf. v. Berlepsch's list of the birds of that country, and two are new—*Hypotrionchis ophryophanes* and *Pyrhura borellii*. Two species from Tucuman are also characterized as new—*Spermophila plumbeiceps* and *Columba tucumana*.

62. *Salvadori on the Bearded Vulture.*

[Notizie intorno al *Gypaëtus barbatus*. Par Tommaso Salvadori. Boll. Mus. Zool. e Anat. comp. R. Univ. Torino, x. No. 207, 1895.]

Particulars are given of some recent captures and observations of this magnificent bird in the Maritime Alps, especially near the Col de Tenda, a district in which its presence has not often been recorded. As Count Salvadori too truly observes, the Bearded Vulture is becoming rarer and rarer in the Alps. To accelerate its extermination a majority (!) at the International Congress held in Paris last June placed *Gypaëtus* on the black list, among the birds "nuisibles à l'agriculture," and even put "les Vautours" under the same ban; not because the true Vultures did any harm, but lest, peradventure, a "Lämmergeier" should escape. The next generation of Swiss ornithologists will probably be able to point proudly to the specimens in their museums and say, "Quite extinct now."

63. *Saunders on the Gaviæ, and Salvin on the Tubinares.*

[Catalogue of the Birds in the British Museum. Vol. XXV. Catalogue of the *Gaviæ* and *Tubinares* in the Collection of the British Museum.—*Gaviæ* (Terns, Gulls, and Skuas), by Howard Saunders. *Tubinares*

(Petrels and Albatrosses), by Osbert Salvin. 475 pp. 8 coloured plates. 8vo. London, 1896.]

Here we have a volume from two of the leading authorities on their respective subjects, and the result is eminently satisfactory. No ornithologist will question the competence of Saunders to catalogue the Gulls or of Mr. Salvin to arrange the Petrels. Dr. Günther, we must allow, could not have put these two important groups into better hands.

The series of Gaviæ in the British Museum consists of 4649 specimens, among which are representatives of every one of the 115 recognized species. Saunders's private collection of this group, got together during the many years in which he has paid special attention to it, has contributed materially to the perfectness of the series. Saunders divides the Gaviæ primarily into two families—Laridæ and Stercorariidæ; and ranges the former under three subfamilies—Sterninæ, Rhynchopinæ, and Larinæ. We are pleased to see no new generic names introduced into the ranks of the Gaviæ, except *Micranous* (for the smaller Noddies), which, however, had been previously instituted in the 'Bulletin' of the B. O. C. The specific terms are also in nearly every case familiar to us.

Mr. Salvin has been for many years our standing referee on Albatrosses and Petrels, and we cannot but rejoice at having his great experience brought to bear upon the Tubinares in a systematic form. He recognizes 107 species of the Order, of which 15 only are not represented in the British Museum among its 1086 specimens. Four families, according to the arrangement here adopted, constitute the Order—Procellariidæ, Puffinidæ, Pelecanoididæ, and Diomediidæ. No new genera are created, and the nomenclature is such as will be familiar to most students of the Order: except that *Pelecanoides exsul* (of the S. Indian Ocean) is separated from *P. urinatrix*, *Diomedea chionopectera* is a new Albatross of the group of *D. exulans*, and *Thalassogeron layardi* is a new species from the Cape seas. We observe that there are three specimens of the newly-discovered *Diomedea regia* in the National Collection. Here,

again, the addition of the Salvin-Godman Collection has materially increased the excellence of the series.

Coloured figures are given of the following species:—*Megalestris maccormicki*; *Oceanodroma monorhis*, *O. hornbyi*; *Puffinus persicus*; *Majaqueus parkinsoni*; *Æstrelata cervicalis*, *Æ. axillaris*, and *Diomedea irrorata*.—P. I. S.

#### 64. *Schalow on Birds from Western Greenland.*

[Ueber eine Vogelsammlung aus Westgrönland. Von Herman Schalow. J. f. O. 1895, p. 457.]

Herr Schalow gives us an account of the birds obtained by Dr. v. Drygalski's expedition to West Greenland in 1892–93, to which Dr. Vanhöffen was attached as naturalist. Examples of 17 species and a number of eggs were obtained. The skins were deposited in the Berlin Museum, and the eggs in the collection of Major Krüger-Velthusen. The author gives us notes on 29 species in the present memoir. Among these is *Tadorna casarca*, which appears, without doubt, to have occurred in 1892 in the district of Upernivik. This is still further north than Iceland, where the Ruddy Sheld-Duck was noticed in 1892 (*cf.* Pearson, *Ibis*, 1895, p. 247).

#### 65. *Sharpe on rare British Birds.*

[A Chapter on Birds. By R. Bowdler Sharpe, LL.D., F.L.S., &c. Rare British Visitors, with Eighteen Coloured Plates. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. 8vo. London, 1895.]

This is a pleasantly-written popular work, with illustrations, by Mr. Keulemans, of the Bee-eater, Roller, Red-footed "Kestrel," Rose-coloured Starling, Golden Oriole, Holböll's Redpoll, Scarlet Rose-Finch, Two-barred Crossbill, Shore-Lark, Blue-headed Wagtail, White-headed Long-tailed Tit, Waxwing, "Common Tree-Warbler (*Hypolais hypolais*)," Aquatic Warbler, Rock-Thrush, Arctic Blue-throat, Black-bellied Dipper, and Red-breasted Flycatcher.

#### 66. *Suschkin on a new Shrike.*

[*Lanius elæagni*, n. sp. Von P. Suschkin. Bull. Soc. Impér. Nat. Moscou, 1895, No. 1.]

*Lanius elæagni* is a new Shrike belonging to the *Otomela*

group, of which examples were obtained by the describer in May, 1894, in the neighbourhood of Kok-Dschida, near the outflow of the Temir into the Emba. It is elaborately described by M. Suschkin in the present paper, and will be figured in Menzbier's 'Ornithology of Turkestan.'

67. *Thompson's 'Glossary of Greek Birds.'*

[A Glossary of Greek Birds. By D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson. 8vo. Oxford, 1895.]

All students of bird-lore will be grateful to Prof. D'Arcy Thompson for the pains he has taken in the compilation of this useful volume, and to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press for having printed and published it. It is a dictionary of Greek birds, containing all the birds' names used in that ancient tongue arranged alphabetically, with a learned disquisition on each of them. The authors by whom the names are employed, the epithets applied to them, their etymology, their various meanings, and all other recorded particulars are fully given and descanted upon. To some of these Greek names, of course, there is no sort of difficulty in stating the modern scientific equivalent; the ἔποψ is *Upupa epops*, and the πελαργός is *Ciconia alba*. But in other cases the exact species referred to is by no means clear, and there are ample grounds for more than one interpretation. It will be seen at once, also, how many terms there are of which the meaning is rightly pronounced to be "uncertain" or "indefinite." Not a few of these, however, have been applied by modern systematists to species to which they cannot possibly have been intended to refer by the ancient authors. 'Greek Birds' will be welcomed by ornithologists as dealing with a branch of their subject which has been but slightly treated of in recent times.

68. *Townsend on Birds from Cocos and Malpelo Islands.*

[Birds from Cocos and Malpelo Islands, with Notes on Petrels obtained at Sea. By C. H. Townsend. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zoöl. Harvard Coll. xxvii. p. 121.]

Cocos Island lies off the Bay of Panama, midway between

Costa Rica and the Galápagos. It was visited by H.M.S. 'Sulphur' in 1840, when a single example of a peculiar Cuckoo (*Coccyzus ferrugineus*) was obtained. The island is volcanic, rising to 1700 feet in elevation, and covered with the densest forest. The naturalists of the U.S. Fish-Commission S.S. 'Albatross,' in 1891, procured examples of six species of birds on it, which are here described. *Cocornis agassizi* is a new genus and species allied to *Cactornis* of the Galápagos; and *Nesotriccus ridgwayi* is a new form of Tyrannidæ, allied to *Eribates magnirostris* of the same islands. *Dendræca aureola* is not distinguishable from examples of the same species from the Galápagos. Two specimens of *Coccyzus ferrugineus* were procured.

On Malpelo Island, an inaccessible volcanic islet in lat.  $3^{\circ} 59' 7''$  N. and long.  $81^{\circ} 34' 27''$  W., four specimens of the rare Gull *Creagrus furcatus* [*Xema furcata*] were shot during the short stay of the expedition on March 3rd, and others were seen on the rocks.

Examples of five species of Petrels were obtained at sea, among which were specimens of the rare *Halocyptena microsoma*.

XXV.—Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.

WE have received the following letters, addressed "to the Editors":—

SIRS,—I think it only right to mention that a perfectly clear understanding existed between those few ornithologists who advocated and those who undertook the English translation of Herr Gätke's volume; the understanding being that it was, as far as possible, "to be Gätke and nothing but Gätke."

I am,

Yours &c.,

J. A. HARVIE-BROWN.

Dunipace, Larbert, Stirlingshire, N.B.,  
Jan. 12th, 1896.